IMPACT OF GEN Y WORK VALUES ON PERCEIVED ORGANIZATIONAL SUPPORT AND JOB ATTITUDES

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Abstract

The demographics of the workplace has vastly changed in the 21st century; with strong aspects of multi-generational workforce dominating work values and characteristics through their specific attitudes, perceptions and learning processes (Kyles 2006). The expectations and expressions of this diverse workforce differ significantly resulting at times in organizational conflicts; challenging both management styles and practices related to managing generational differences across organizations (McGuire et al 2007). While it is of interest to study multi-generational workforce and impact of their work attitudes on prevalent HRM practices across organizations; this study shall specifically focus on the most evolving and happening Generation of the century, termed GEN Y in the concerned research.GEN Y or Millennial Generation or Net Generation and even Echo Boomers[1] are broadly classified as children born in the eighties and early nineties, comprising a working population in age group 20-29 years. Various research studies in the context of understanding specific characteristics of this young working population have identified this cohort as being impatient, non-confirmative, thriving on connectivity, speed, flexibility and a desire to challenge and excel in their respective domains through collaboration and team work (Deloitte Survey 2005, Deloitte and IABC Report 2008, Haworth Report 2010).Preliminary studies linking GEN Y and HRM practices have concentrated on aspects of attracting, engaging through learning & development) and retaining this talented workforce through a

[1]http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Generation_Y

global perspective. This research shall however focus on the context of understanding work values and attitudes of Indian GEN Y employees born from 1983-1993, in the age group of 19-29 years; analyzing the connectivity in their changing preferences and related impact of HRM practices for organizations in India (both national and multi-nationals).

Introduction

The workforce of the 21st century termed as the 'Multi-Generational' Workforce is characterized with a mix of all generations from Baby Boomers, to Generation X, with recent and ongoing inclusion of Generation Y since the last few years. Research in the last two decades has steadily contributed to understanding the differences in generational cohorts and impact of these different outlook and approaches on organizational practices thus trying to understand the context of person-organization fit (Sparrow 2000) (Kupperschmidt2000)(McGuire, Todnem and Hutchings 2007) (Mackey, Gardener and Forsyth 2008).

While studies have worked on the multigenerational context, analyzing outlook, approaches (Jorgensen 2005), intergenerational conflicts and even intergenerational differences in values (Cennamo and Gardner 2008); there is dearth of research on understanding values and characteristics of Gen Y employees and implications of their outlook and approaches (albeit their learning process and values) on organizational processes and practices. Plethora of research has been conducted on generational cohorts and their differences impacting organizational performance through an impact on HR practices, but in the context of US, UK or Canada. There exists a dearth of research in relation to developing economies, specifically the Asian countries where even the work values are highly differentiable in a cross-cultural context.

This study is an attempt to look at Indian Gen Y employees who comprise almost half of the Indian working population and is growing at a rapid pace. Preliminary studies and efforts

related to deciphering these young employees have classified them as the most demanding population with high expectations from the work environment in terms of better on-site support facilities and norms for work-life balance. They believe in not only socially collaborating but also engaging socially as an extension of their workplace to enhance learning opportunities and maintain a balance between their personal and professional lives. This generation of Indian youngsters is tech-savvy, entrepreneurial, ambitious, optimistic and ready to walk the extra mile for achieving their dreams and goals (Haworth, iDea and Johnson Controls Report 2010). The research proposes to link outlook and approaches of this generation based on their work values (extrinsic, intrinsic, status-related, freedom-related, and social related) to their expectations from organizations in terms of organizational policies and practices (specifically HRM practices) through a critical analysis and fact finding process. The motive is that this study should be a preliminary document and information resource for an potential future researcher, who may be interested in understand Indian Gen Y employees and their outlook towards work across Indian organizations.

Literature Review

1.1 Who are Generation Y employees?

Gen Y are loosely defined as a group born between 1982-2000 (hence the term Millennial Generation) who would range in the age groups of 15-29 years identified herein as the young generation. Statistics by the U.S. Census Bureau, estimate that Generation Y comprises of around 25.7% of the world total population given the age category of 15-29 years.[2]Analysts define this generation as having an upbringing in a world marked by neoliberal approach towards politics and economics marked by increased usage of communications, media and digital technologies. This generation is also at times referred to as the 'Wired Generation' that needs to be connected at all times and feels most comfortable in digital environments. For the purpose of this research study Generation Y shall be considered between the age

[2] Refer Annexure (Table 1.1)

group of 20-29 years, which comprises almost 17% of the world population as on 2012 (mid-Year population estimation by U.S. Census Bureau, International Database)[3].

Gen Y has started entering the ranks, infiltrating the traditional workplace with their baggage of digital technology, social media networks and higher expectations/norms towards a flexible work environment. They are increasingly demanding, wired and virtually connected, questioning traditional practices cum authority, displaying and openly voicing their disagreements and opinions without paying heed to set cultural norms and organizational practices. This is a generation that knows what it wants, in terms of their space, comfort levels or communication channels. They are open and brash about their expectations and expressions, seeking to collaborate and rapidly exchange knowledge/information, networking for acceptance, thus challenging ways traditional organizations functioned.

A study by Deloitte Consulting in 2005, attempted to understand Generation Y or Millennial Generation by way of understanding their specificities as a digitally connected and wired generation of employees. Extensive studies have been conducted on Gen Y to understand what ticks them; why are their expectations and how do they link to their workplace.

Millennials at work
Work well with friends and on teams
Collaborative, resourceful, innovative thinkers
Love a challenge
Seek to make a difference
Want to produce something worthwhile
Desire to be a hero
Impatient
Comfortable with speed and change
Thrive on flexibility and space to explore
Partner well with mentors

[3]http://www.census.gov/population/international/data/idb/worldpop.php

Value guidance and Expect respect

Source: Deloitte Consulting (2005). Who Are the Millennials, aka Generation Y?

Global survey by IABC and Deloitte Consulting towards understanding GEN Y imperatives, discusses how important it is for GEN Y employees to feel connected, updated and involved in an organization. The paper details viewpoints of these employees that highlight aspects of frequent, short and updated communications, alongside factors like honesty with clarity in communication. Gen Y is dynamic and eager to collaborate, they respect leaders who are honest, forthright and open, hence their relationship to an organization is not just based on their perception of the organization but also of the leader they are associated with. This emotionally charged enthusiastic young workforce seeks to contribute to their organizations through a plethora of ideas, suggestions and informed opinions; which at times challenge the traditional mindset of organizational management. Their ideas are creative, innovative and at times exceptional; being based on the knowledge acquired by being part of a socially networked cum connected domain. However this generation also believes in the concept of instant acceptance and open feedback, these being critical factors for their enthusiasm and satisfaction towards organizational processes.

From Abdallah in Tanzania:
"Most organizations do not give a chance for the younger generations to communicate up effectively. You find now that younger generations have a lot of ideas—really brilliant ideas, actually. If management can find a way to tap the knowledge that is brought in by these young generations, it would bring a very big impact to the organization."

From Jennifer in Hong Kong:
"One of the great challenges for organizations is that younger professionals do not think it safe or do not have ways to share their opinion with more senior members of the company—knowledge that could be valuable."

Source: 'Words of Gen Y', Deloitte Consulting, IABC Report, GEN Y Imperatives, April 2008

Similar survey on Global Workforce Innovation was conducted by Johnson Control in association with Haworth, iDea and Oxygenz.com (Generation Y and Workplace Annual Report2010). The survey outlines similar factors as discussed, but goes beyond communications and connectivity, detailing aspects of workplace ergonomics, sustainability and environmental consciousness that impacts engagement levels for Gen Y. The report defines Gen Y as collaborative, mobile, flexible and unconventional, valuing sustainability and environmental adaptability. This report is explicit in detailing the valuation this generation places on factors like 'Workplace environment', perceived as a emotionally engaged place where they socialize, learn and collaborate. This is their area or their 'own work space' which is personal, sacrosanct linked to their well-being in the organization. Being emotional and trendy (also referred as stylish), Gen Y prefers workplaces that are boundary less, colourful and open with breakout spaces, conversation areas and chill out zones that allow them to collaborate, innovate and be creative. This aspect as per the survey is of utmost importance to these youngsters who value their spaces or personal zones (personal desks) as a reflection of their identity. Most of them prefer urbanized and trendy work areas, with the exception being Chinese Gen Y'ers who have a preference for rural settings as mentioned in the survey. The survey also puts up interesting facts related to why GEN Y'ers opt to work for specific organizations; prominent factors being Learning & Development opportunities, Quality of Life and Work Colleagues (includes peers & superiors).[4]

1.2. Generational Diversity and HRM

Generational diversity or Multi-generational workforce have been steadily gaining research attention over the past two decades with a plethora of research focusing specifically on dynamics of these generational cohorts such as Baby Boomers, Generation X and Generation Y. Most researchers agree that with increase in life expectancy and survival of the working population, there is an existence of different generational cohorts working alongside across

[4] Refer Annexure Table 1.3

organizations.Kupperschmidt(2000, Pg 66) refers to generational cohorts as "identifiable group thatshares birth years, age location, and significant life events at critical developmentalstages". The questions that organizations seek to understand about generational cohorts is related to the difference between these cohorts in terms of values and preferences that impact their learning process and work style; highly important in understanding the management aspects of generational cohorts.

Researchers argue that differences in generational cohorts is related to their learning process that is impacted by their early socialization process impacting development stages of life and adulthood, sociocultural events like disasters, wars or it's after effects, advent of technological factors that impact family and life patterns, political events like protests, revolts, or collapse of political machinery (nation specific), socioeconomic events like market collapses, depressions and successive recessions (Mackey, Gardener and Forsyth 2008).

(McGuire, Todnem and Hutchings 2007) point out that these differences in learning process of generational cohorts are widely exhibited through their outlook and approach, while ageing employees have high experience levels, maturity, work-orientation and stability; the younger workforce is highly mobile, impatient, and exhibit less organizational commitment but are entrepreneurial, better educated and technologically more competent than previous generations. They further argue that it is these differences in generational cohorts that give way to intergenerational conflicts impacting organizational performance; failure to understand and manage intergenerational conflicts in severe economic situations leads to further complications in terms of lower employee morale, productivity and innovation in turn impacting corporate citizenship resulting in higher employee attrition and turnover.

1.3. The context of HRM in India

Literature review related to the study and understanding of Human Resource Management in the Indian context has been primarily based on the post-liberalization era, while being generic in nature; studying the Indian context of HRM across all spectrums of the Indian industry. The focus has been on understanding what HRM means in the Indian context across the industries (Singh 2005), how this particular discipline is helping firms cope against MNC competition (Som 2002, 2006, 2008), and cross – cultural context in terms of comparison with the US and UK (Amba-Rao 1994a,1994b, 2000) (Budhwar et al 1997, 2001, 2003, 2004). (Ratnam& Chandra 1996) through their case based review of selected organizations across the spectrum of Indian firms, detailed aspects of diversity and its related challenges of equity and equality for both employers and HR practitioners. The paper details broad challenges of HRM related to coping with issues of workforce diversity while strategizing its resources to deal with issues of employment and sustainable development for the organization.

Review on HRM by other prominent researchers has addressed major issues related to values (Sinha 1980, 1988, 1990; Singh 1990), leadership (Sinha 1984) with less focus on understanding generational issues in workforce managementrelated to work values and its impact on functioning of HRM practices across Indian organizations.

1.4. Indian Generation Y employees

CRISIL 2010 Report on Skilling India highlights the tremendous opportunity and challenges for Indian business organizations. The country with a population of 1.2 billion (as on 2010) has 17.6% share in the world population pie making it the second largest country after China in terms of demography. This is slated to change by 2030, with India reaching 1.5 billion population crossing China and becoming the largest populated country in the world. While this may seem challenging, there is also an opportunity; India's working population (15-59 years) will swell from 749 million to 924 million by year 2030, making it the most desired location of talent acquisition (employee availability) heightening business growth and

progress in the country. Interestingly as on 2010, half of India's working population that is around 362 million is below the age of 25 and this number shall only increase with the population figures making it one of the youngest countries of the world. Research report by Haworth, iDea and Johnson Control on Gen Y and Workplace, 2010 gives a different picture relating to Indian youngsters (Gen Y employees) through their global survey. Indian Gen Y workforce is considered the most demanding population with high expectations from the work environment in terms of better on-site support facilities and norms for work-life balance. They believe in not only socially collaborating but also engaging socially as an extension of their workplace to enhance learning opportunities and maintain a balance between their personal and professional lives. This generation of Indian youngsters is tech-savvy, entrepreneurial, ambitious, optimistic and ready to walk the extra mile for achieving their dreams and goals. They are strongly influenced by social opinions and base their judgments on peer factors much like their counterparts across the globe. They are a generation tuned to opportunities and consumerism, which make them more open for change, demanding with higher levels of expectations, impacting their perception towards organizations and their engagement processes.

MaFoi Randstad Workmonitor – Wave I Report 2011, details the changing work characteristics of Indian GEN Y employees. The report states that mobility intent index is highest amongst the 18-24 years age category of Indian employees who are quite open for change and evaluate organizations on the availability of learning and growth opportunities including better engagement processes. While 78% Indian employees (across age groups), have a social profile on the web, an equal percentage of them use this medium for gathering information about prospective employee organizations; while 84% of Indian employees use Social Media tools & platforms to understand prospective employee work culture. Detailing the impact of Social Media and peer opinions pertaining to prospective employees, the survey states that almost 75% employees are hesitant to join organizations which have been negatively rated on this medium. Moreover 63% employees don't think that access to Social

Media at workplace impacts their productivity, while 79%actually believe that this medium helps increase their work output through sharing and collaboration.

Scope of Research

The working population of India, as per Census Report 2011 in the age group 15-59 years comprises 56.9% of the entire population[5], of which almost half comprises youth in the age group 15-24 years (UNESCO definition)[6]. It is estimated by UNESCO that while the current world youth population stands at 1.2 billion (that is 18% of world population), it shall increase by almost 72 million by year 2025. This in itself poses a great challenge for organizations, as this burgeoning young population is slated to enter and infiltrate the workforce of today and tomorrow posing several challenges in terms of their values, attitudes and perceptions impacting expectations from workplace. The challenge broadens in the context of a country like India, where almost half of India's working population that is around 362 million is below the age of 25 and this number shall only increase with the population figures making it one of the youngest countries of the world (CRISIL 2010 Skilling Report).However the questions that arises and needs to be dwelt upon is related to whether Indian organizations are prepared for this challenge or have potentially worked on the aspect of managing the expectations of a Young workforce (Gen Y). Literature review and previous studies done in the context of Indian organizations highlight that while a lot of studies have been initiated and conducted in the cultural context, leadership and work values[7], almost minimal research has been initiated in the context of generational perspectives; whether multi-generational or with focus on a particular generational cohort. This is surprising given that with increase in life expectancy almost 3 generations (Baby Boomers, Generation X and Generation Y) are working alongside in the work domain across major Indian organizations. While academicians have argued over similarities in generational

[5]http://www.censusindia.gov.in/Census_Data_2001/India_at_glance/broad.aspx
[6]http://www.unesco.org/new/en/social-and-human-sciences/themes/social-transformations/youth/strategy/
[7] Refer section of studies in HRM related to India under Literature Review

cohorts (Kyles 2006) (Cennamo and Gardener 2007) (McGuire et al 2008), stating that it isn't always necessary for the entire cohort population to demonstrate similar values and preferences; they are unanimous about the aspect of similarities across a major population section of corresponding generational cohorts related to values, attitudes, preferences and work styles. Which means that if the majority population of a particular generation shares similar work values and preferences regarding work setting and characteristics, then it is bound to impact their expectations from the workplace in turn impacting organizational practices (specifically HRM practices) in managing and engaging such a new age workforce.

The researcher intends to conduct study through identification of this particular Research Gap, wherein there has been a lack of focus on generational studies in India relating work values, attitudes and work preferences of a particular generation to organizational practices, specifically HRM practices. The researcher intends to conduct research study specifically on GEN Y employees in the age group 19-29 years comprising the burgeoning young working population of India. The researcher aims to understand the work values of GEN Y employees and their related expectations from work in terms of intrinsic, altruistic, status, freedom and social values (Cennamo and Gardener 2007).

Research Objectives

The objectives of this research would be to formulate and test the following Hypothesis, analyzing and drawing inference from the result to provide a better understanding of work values of GEN Y Indian employees and its relation to Organizational HRM practices.

H1: Generation Y will show moderate levels of extrinsic values impacting their expectations related to compensation and long term commitment to organization.

H2: Generation Y will show higher levels of intrinsic values impacting their expectations related to job design and learning & development.

H3: Generation Y will show moderate levels of status related values impacting their expectations related to performance management systems.

H4: Generation Y will show higher levels of freedom related values impacting their expectations related to work environment (including work place ergonomics and work-life balance).

H5: Generation Y will show higher levels of social values impacting their expectations related to work group collaboration, social networking and peer relationships.

Research Methodology

A. The research work shall begin with formulation of Hypothesis as given above.

B. The research intends to use either the Work Values Inventory (Super 1962) or Work Values Scale (Lynos 2004) or at a later stage modify components of both instruments and create a modified version based on contingencies of the research.

C. The research is intended to be conducted across selected organizations in the city of Pune given the composition and presence of all major sector organizations in the city (Manufacturing, IT, ITeS and Services). Also the city is home to a large population of young students and young employees (GEN Y), hence a sizeable population of this generation and their characteristics are exhibited in work domains of the city.

D. Questionnaire based survey method shall be employed for empirical research. The survey shall be in a detailed format to be filled up by Generation Y employees based

on samples across selected organizations. The survey shall be administered both through Online platforms like social networking sites and through personal interactions like interviews with selected sample of the population.

E. The researcher also plans to conduct Interview based survey with HR personnel of selected organizations in Pune to understand their perspectives and challenges in managing expectation of Gen Y employees to avail a 'Employer view point'.

F. Thereafter appropriate statistical tools (SPSS version 17) shall be utilized for analysis of the available research data, detailing on acceptance or rejection of devised hypothesis. Conclusions and findings shall be based on the outcomes of the research and shall be elaborated upon accordingly.

Limitations

This study is focused on GEN Y employees of selected organizations of Pune, given the mobility limitations of the researcher for practical purposes. Hence it is difficult to generalize the results and finding in the context of Indian Gen Y employees population. Also work values are subject to change in terms of urban and rural settings which may impact expectations from work itself for organizations employing urban or rural GEN Y employees, which was not dealt in this study.

Disclaimer

This proposal is just a preliminary document of intention to conduct research in the given area and topic. However the research is subject to review by the concerned Doctoral Guide and his/her recommendations or suggestions to refine the same shall be final and binding.

ANNEXURE

Table 1.1

Generations	Population	% Of World Population
Gen Y - 15-29 years old	1,723,911,077.00	25.47
Gen x - 30-44 year old	1,442,951,791.00	21.32
Baby Boomers - 5 - 64 years old	1,233,836,150.00	18.56
Traditionalists - 65-74 years old	316,330,067.00	4.67

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, International Database

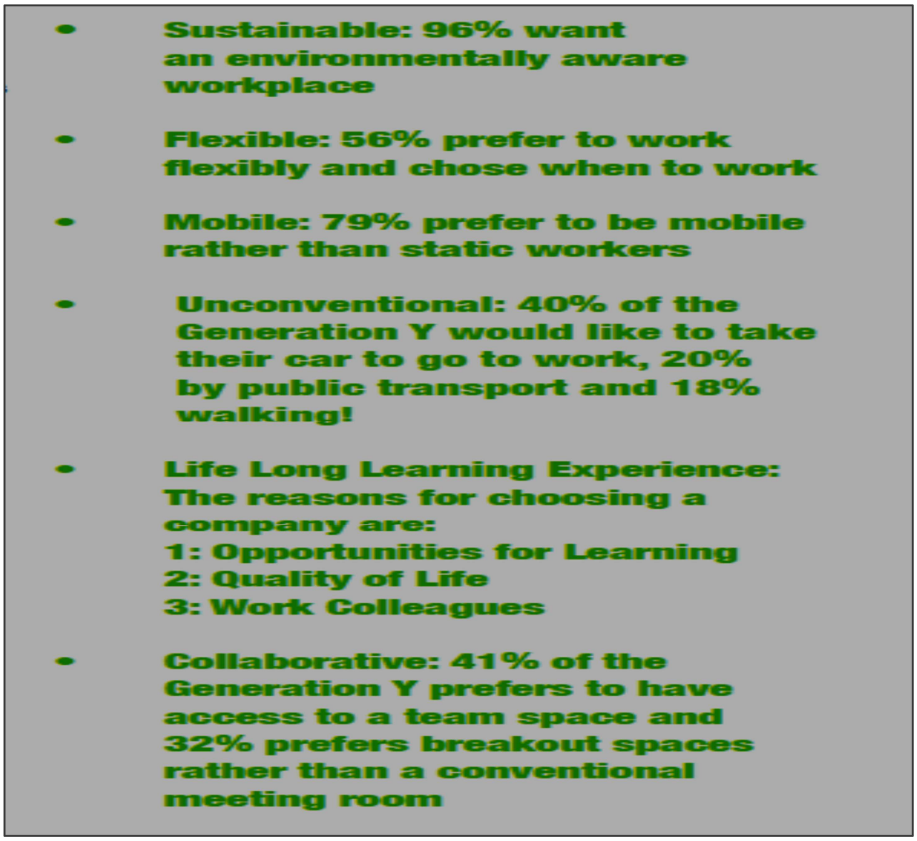
Table 1.2

World Midyear Population by Age and Sex for 2012				
Age	**Both Sexes Population**	**Male Population**	**Female Population**	**Sex Ratio**
Total	7,023,324,899	3,534,797,376	3,488,527,523	101.3
0-4	634,481,069	327,679,623	306,801,446	106.8
5-9	608,928,831	315,170,283	293,758,548	107.3
10-14	596,769,288	309,008,632	287,760,656	107.4

World Midyear Population by Age and Sex for 2012				
Age	**Both Sexes Population**	**Male Population**	**Female Population**	**Sex Ratio**
15-19	597,027,875	308,014,052	289,013,823	106.6
20-24	601,939,568	308,325,050	293,614,518	105.0
25-29	565,187,049	287,536,880	277,650,169	103.6

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, International Database

Table 1.3


Sustainable: 96% want an environmentally aware workplace
Flexible: 56% prefer to work flexibly and chose when to work
Mobile: 79% prefer to be mobile rather than static workers
Unconventional: 40% of the Generation Y would like to take their car to go to work, 20% by public transport and 18% walking!
Life Long Learning Experience: The reasons for choosing a company are:
1: Opportunities for Learning
2: Quality of Life
3: Work Colleagues
Collaborative: 41% of the Generation Y prefers to have access to a team space and 32% prefers breakout spaces rather than a conventional meeting room

Source: Johnson Control, Haworth, and iDea Survey, Generation Y and Global Annual Workplace Report 2010

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